

Home Mortgage Disclosure Act¹

Introduction

The Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA) was enacted by the Congress in 1975 and is implemented by the Federal Reserve Board's (FRB's) Regulation C, Home Mortgage Disclosure, 12 CFR Part 203 (Regulation C). The period of 1988 through 1992 saw substantial changes to HMDA. Especially significant were the amendments to the act resulting from the Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery, and Enforcement Act of 1989 (FIRREA). Coverage was expanded in the FIRREA amendments to include many independent nondepository mortgage lenders, in addition to the previously covered banks, savings associations, and credit unions. Coverage of independent mortgage bankers was further expanded effective January 1, 1993, with the implementation of amendments contained in the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation Improvement Act of 1991 (FDICIA). For a more detailed discussion of the history of HMDA, *see* the FFIEC's web site at www.ffiec.gov/hmda/history2.htm.

HMDA grew out of public concern over credit shortages in certain urban neighborhoods. The Congress believed that some financial institutions had contributed to the decline of some geographic areas by their failure to provide adequate home financing to qualified applicants on reasonable terms and conditions. Thus, one purpose of HMDA and Regulation C is to provide the public with information that will help show whether financial institutions are serving the housing credit needs of the neighborhoods and communities in which they are located. A second purpose is to aid public officials in targeting public investments from the private sector to areas where they are needed. Finally, the FIRREA amendments of 1989 require the collection and disclosure of data about applicant and borrower characteristics to assist in identifying possible discriminatory lending patterns and enforcing anti-discrimination statutes.

As the name implies, HMDA is a disclosure law that relies upon public scrutiny for its effectiveness. It does not prohibit any specific activity of lenders, and it does not establish a quota system of mortgage loans to be made in any Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)² or other geographic area as defined by the Office of Management and Budget.

Financial institutions must report data regarding loan originations, applications, and loan purchases, as well as requests under a pre-approval program (as defined in §203.2(b)) if the pre-approval request is denied or results in

the origination of a home purchase loan. HMDA requires lenders to report the ethnicity, race, gender, and gross income of mortgage applicants and borrowers. Lenders must also report information regarding the pricing of the loan and whether the loan is subject to the Home Ownership and Equity Protection Act, 15 USC 1639. Additionally, lenders must identify the type of purchaser for mortgage loans that they sell. Some lenders have the option of indicating the reasons for their decisions to deny a loan application. (Lenders regulated by the OCC or OTS must indicate the reasons for denial.).

Regulation C requires institutions to report lending data to their supervisory agencies on a loan-by-loan and application-by-application basis by way of a "register" reporting format. The supervisory agencies, through the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council (FFIEC), compile this information in the form of individual disclosure statements for each institution, and in the form of aggregate reports for all covered institutions within each MSA. In addition, the FFIEC produces other aggregate reports that show lending patterns by median age of homes and by the central city or non-central city location of the property. The public may obtain the individual disclosures and aggregate reports from the FFIEC or from central depositories located in each MSA. Individual disclosure statements may also be obtained from financial institutions.

Applicability

The regulation covers two categories of financial institutions. The first category is a "depository institution," which the regulation defines as a bank, savings association, or a credit union that:

- on the preceding December 31, had assets in excess of the annually published asset threshold;
- on the preceding December 31, had a home or branch office in an MSA;
- in the preceding calendar year, originated at least one first-lien home purchase loan (including or a refinancing of such loan) on a one-to-four-family dwelling; and
- meets one of the following criteria: (1) the institution is federally insured or regulated; (2) the mortgage loan referred to is federally guaranteed, insured, or supplemented; or (3) the institution intended to sell the loan to Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac.

The second category is a for-profit, nondepository "mortgage lending institution." A nondepository mortgage lending institution is covered if:

- in the preceding calendar year, it originated home purchase loans (including refinancings of home purchase loans) that either: (1) equaled ten percent or more of its loan

¹ This section fully incorporates the examination procedures issued under DSC RD Memo 04-015: Revised Interagency Examination Procedures for the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act.

² The institution may or may not have a physical presence in the MSA per §203.2(c)(2) of Regulation C.